

# Retiree Report

July, 2001

A Quarterly Publication from the  
**Fairfax County Retirement Agency**

## Retiree COLA Includes 1% Supplement

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) of 3.4% for retirees in the Employees', Police Officers, and Uniformed Retirement Systems will be effective July 1, 2001.

The 2.4% base COLA reflects the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Washington area for the period ending March 31, 2001. According to the ordinances which govern the Systems, COLA's are set at the lesser of the Consumer Price Index increase for the previous year or 4%. Each Board of Trustees may also grant up to an additional 1% depending on the funds' available actuarial surplus.

This year retirees in each of the three retirement systems were granted the additional 1% ad hoc COLA, giving each retiree a COLA for this year of 3.4%. This cost of living increase will be reflected in your July 31 check.

Members who retired: between July 2, 2000 and October 1, 2000 will receive 75% of the relative COLA amount; between October 2, 2000 and January 1, 2001 will receive 50%; between January 2, 2001 and April 1, 2001 will receive 25%; and after April 1, 2001 will not receive a COLA this year.

## Seniors- On-The-Go! Takes Off

On Thursday, March 1, 2001, Fairfax County launched a new senior citizen transportation pilot program called Seniors-On-The-Go! This program offers discounted taxicab rides to seniors 65 years or older who reside within designated zip codes. Seniors-On-The-Go! is a part of the Board of Supervisors' Senior Transportation Initiative approved for FY2001.

Seniors who live in the appropriate zip codes and meet the income criteria for the program may purchase \$30 worth of taxicab coupons for only \$10. Once a senior is registered, that senior may purchase up to 16 coupon booklets within a twelve-

month period and may use those coupons with all taxicab companies licensed in Fairfax County. There is no restriction for the day and times that the coupons are used, nor is there any restriction on where a senior enrolled in the program may travel. Income limits are \$50,000 per year for single senior citizens and \$60,000 per year for married couples.

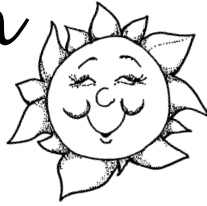
Outreach efforts to register interested participants will take place at six Fairfax County senior centers and four community centers. Future outreach efforts will target senior residences and

## What's Inside?

Spotlight on The Agency	2
Employees' Association Annual Meeting	2
Trustee Tracking	3
Social Security News	4 & 5
Fan Care Program Returns	5

*continued on page 6*

# Spotlight on The Retirement Agency



**Susan Tavallai** has been with the Retirement Agency since July 1999. Prior to coming to Retirement, Susan worked for DPWES where she worked for several years. In March, Susan celebrated 12 years as a County employee. Her duties include administrative support to the Board of Trustees, Budgeting Coordination, monitoring expenses and office management.

Susan was born in Tehran, Iran. When she was 18 years old she left the Country to go to college in Lansing, Michigan where she earned

her Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University in 1983. She moved to Northern Virginia in 1983 and stayed home for a while to take care of her baby who is now 15 years old. In 1995 she went back to school and earned her masters degree in Administrative Management and Accounting. She moved to a new home in South Riding, VA in 1999 and is thoroughly enjoying her short commute to work.

When not working, Susan volunteers her time with a group that focuses on Women's issues. She also enjoys hiking and swimming.

Susan's favorite part of her job is attending "Weaver University" which is taught by the Retirement Agency's Sr. Investment Manager, Tom Weaver. This gives her the opportunity to learn more about the world of investing.

*Often the staff in an office are just voices on the other end of the phone or a name you hear in passing. Each upcoming issue of Retiree Report will spotlight one individual of the Retirement Agency staff in an effort to help you get to know them better.*



## Annual Meeting of the Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

The 8th Annual Fairfax County Retired Employees Association (FCREA) Annual Meeting was held May 16, 2001 at the Government Center.

According to John Yeatman, Chairman, there was a large turnout including guest speakers Supervisor Gerry Hyland and Joe Thomas, CEO of the Credit Union.

The proposed amendment and editorial changes to the FCREA bylaws were unanimously approved at the annual meeting. If you would like a copy of the bylaws please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Charlotte Cable, 223 Rosemeade Place, Leesburg, Virginia 20175.

### **Effective July 1, 2001 FCREA Board Members and Officers**

**are as follows:**

**John Yeatman**, Chairman  
**Jane Kelsey**, Vice Chairman  
**Joyce Gerhart**, Secretary  
**Dorris Medlin**, Treasurer  
**George Symanski**  
**Don Lederer**  
**Martha Collier**  
**Jean Busboso**  
**Charlotte Cable**

The purpose of this association is to promote and protect the retirement interests of all Fairfax County employees retired under the Fairfax County Employees' Retirement System. Any retired Fairfax County employee or surviving spouse is eligible to become a member of the association by paying \$5 for an annual membership or \$50 for lifetime membership. For more information, please contact Dorris Medlin at 703-256-6379.

# Get to Know Your Trustees

While many retirees are familiar with their System's Board of Trustees, others may not know anything at all about the people who are charged with the proper operation of the System to which they belong. This quarter's column, features the two newest members of the Uniformed Retirement System. **Frank Henry Grace, III** and **Donald F. Maddrey** were both appointed by the Board of Supervisors in June, filling two vacant positions on the Board of Trustees.

## Trustee Tracking

One of the two newest members of the Board of Trustees of the Uniformed Retirement System, **Frank Henry Grace, III**, currently manages a wealth management department for Alliance Bank & Legg Mason.

Mr. Grace brings with him a level of wealth management experience achieved in more than 17 years in positions as Senior Vice President and Vice President at two of Virginia's banks, Alliance and First Union National.

On the personal side, Mr. Grace is married, with 3 children and stays very active in his involvement with organizations such as the Optimist Club, the Rotary Club and the Northern Virginia Partnership for Children.

### **Vera Finberg, Re-Elected**

**Vera Finberg**, librarian, Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, has been re-elected to the Board of Trustees of the Employees' Retirement System.

Ms. Finberg is the County employee-elected trustee on the Employees' Board. She has served in this position for the past eight years. We congratulate her on her re-election.

**Mr. Donald F. Maddrey**, an employment and labor relations professional with over 11 years of labor and employment law experience, was also recently appointed to the Uniformed Retirement System Board of Trustees.

Mr. Maddrey has a solid background in equal employment opportunity issues, experience with resolving employment disputes through grievance and mediation and has considerable knowledge of the Federal Labor Relations Act. He is currently enrolled in the Human Resource Management Certification Program at the University of Virginia.

Mr. Maddrey's professional experience includes more than seven years in his current position as a labor and legislative representative for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Prior to this position he worked as an Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

A wide variety of course study programs including a Bachelor of Science from East Carolina University, certification as a Paralegal, studies at the National Labor College, the National Employment Law Institute and George Washington University, round out Mr. Maddrey's extensive resume of education and experience.

**Please join the Retirement Agency in welcoming these two appointees to the Uniformed Retirement System Board of Trustees.**

# Social Security

# UPDATE!

## Social Security Consumer Price Index Fix

The Social Security Administration (SSA) will be issuing one-time payments in mid-July to about 45 million Social Security beneficiaries. These payments will ensure that beneficiaries are compensated for any shortfall in their benefits paid from January 2000 through July 2001 as a result of an error the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) made in the calculation of the consumer price index (CPI) starting in 1999.

Regular monthly benefits, if affected, will be adjusted beginning with the payment received in August 2001. Beneficiaries will receive a written explanation of their one-time payment and an explanation about their adjusted monthly benefit. This process will occur in mid-July 2001 and will be automatic. **Beneficiaries do not need to take any action to receive their adjusted benefits.**

On September 28, 2000, the BLS, an agency in the Department of Labor, announced that an error had occurred in the computation of the CPI. For more information, go to: <http://www.bls.gov/cpirev01.htm>. By statute, SSA uses the CPI, as published by BLS, to calculate annual increases in benefit levels for Social Security payments. As a result of the CPI error, the December 1999 cost-

of-living adjustment (COLA)—paid in January 2000—was one-tenth of one percent below what it would have been had the error not occurred. As a result, the COLA applied to Social Security payments was 2.4 percent, rather than 2.5 percent. Most Social Security beneficiaries have received lower payments, since January 2000, than if there had been no CPI error. The shortfall for the majority of beneficiaries is \$1 per month. These payments, which will be separate from regular monthly payments, represent the money that beneficiaries would have been paid since January 2000 if there had been no error in the CPI. Of course, retroactive benefits will only be paid to individuals who actually received benefits at some time between January 2000 and July 2001, and who were affected by the December 1999 COLA.

For most beneficiaries, these payments will total up to \$19, or \$1 per month for January 2000 through July 2001. In August 2001 and beyond, fully adjusted benefits will be issued. These payments will include the amount due, based on the recalculated CPI. The total amount of retroactive payments to compensate for the shortfall to beneficiaries is estimated to be \$1.1 billion.

## Fairfax County Provides Tax Relief for the Elderly and Disabled

Fairfax County provides real estate, personal property tax and decal fee relief to citizens who are either 65 or older or permanently and totally disabled. The county also offers rental grants to eligible seniors and those with disabilities. Real Estate Tax Relief: Senior citizens and those with permanent disabilities who owned and occupied their residence in Fairfax County as of December 31 of the preceding year may qualify for real

estate tax relief from the county if they meet certain income and financial worth qualifications. Applications for all 2001 programs were due April 2, 2001. However, first-time filers and citizens filing late due to hardship have until December 31 of the year following the year the application is due. For more information or to obtain an application, call 703-222-8234 or visit [www.co.fairfax.va.us/dta](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/dta).

# Social Security

# FUN FACTS!

## Did You Know?

✍ There are about one billion possible number combinations for the nine-digit Social Security number. As of last year, about 40 percent of the possible combinations were used. There are enough number combinations to last until the end of the century.

✍ **Social Security is an economic compact among generations.** Social Security taxes paid today go mostly to fund benefit payments for today's retirees.

✍ **Social Security has made an enormous difference in the lives of older Americans.** More than 9-in-10 retirees now get Social Security benefits each month and only 11 percent of senior citizens live in poverty.

✍ **Social Security provides a foundation on which to build retirement security.** A comfortable retirement rests on three elements-- Social Security, savings and pensions.

✍ **Changing demographics are driving the need for changes in Social Security.** We're living longer and healthier. 77 million baby boomers will begin retiring in about 2010 and in about 30 years there will be nearly twice as many older Americans as there are today.

**Social Security's Internet website [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov), receives over 300,000 hits daily. The website includes, among other services, program information, benefit planners and an online retirement application.**



## Fan Care Program Returns



To help you beat the heat or save money on electric bills this summer, the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) announces the ninth year of FAN CARE, an electric fan distribution program sponsored by Virginia Power in partnership with the Virginia Department for the Aging. Each year the AAA distributes approximately 100 fans to senior adults in the Fairfax area.

With a grant from Virginia Power, the AAA will purchase a limited number of fans and distribute them to eligible seniors. Donated fans become the property of the individual.

To qualify for FAN CARE, persons must be 60 years or older, income eligible, and have an existing home situation that presents a threat to the person's health and wellbeing. Not all persons in the household need to be elderly to qualify for a fan.

If you are interested in acquiring a fan, please call AAA at 703-324-5411. Fans will be distributed to eligible persons on a first-come, first served basis.

## Can You Help RSVP?

The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) has asked Supervisor Hyland for help in obtaining names of African American males over 50 (along the Route 1 corridor), who might be interested in volunteering for the Grandfathers Group Mentoring Program.

RSVP has indicated that they have several boys from the Mount Vernon District on a waiting list for the program. RSVP has contacted local churches, but is still in need of volunteers.

For more information or to volunteer your time, please contact Patrick L. Hallesy, Staff Aide to Supervisor Gerry Hyland at 703-780-7518.

## **Seniors-On-the-Go** *continued from page 1*

assisted-living facilities. Only residents living in a limited area of the county are eligible for the pilot program. After the one-year pilot period, the program will be evaluated to determine if the program should be continued.

For more information, call the Fairfax County Department of Transportation at 703-324-1172, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. The designated pilot program zip codes are as follows:

20120 20121 20151 22003 22027 22030  
22031 22032 22033 22042 22043 22124  
22151 22180 22181 22182

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